

From: Robert Sartin
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/28/02 12:33pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am against the current proposed settlement of the United States vs. Microsoft case.

I have been programming professionally for 20 years. In reviewing the terms of the settlement, I am unable to see how the terms will in any meaningful way improve the competitiveness of the current environment. The disclosures required by Microsoft are too weak and the exemptions too great. It will be trivial for Microsoft to continue to keep secret important information and use it for unfair competitive advantage.

The proposed settlement will perpetuate an environment in which Microsoft can, and based on past experience will, withhold critical information from developers who are perceived to be competing with Microsoft. Lack of access to such information, generally available for other platforms and specifically available to Microsoft and partner teams working on similar applications, will prevent a developer from producing competitive products. Continued tight bundling and coupling of Microsoft's chosen solutions will prevent new entries into the market of better technology at lower prices.

Consumers will continue to be forced to purchase and use the solutions provided by Microsoft. The price we pay will be higher due to the lack of credible competitive alternatives. Technical innovation will be decreased because it will not be necessary for competitiveness.

Any settlement in this case must include provisions that will create a truly competitive environment, including competitors in the commercial and free software marketplace, and offer a variety of choices to consumers.

Regards,

Robert Sartin
10412 Ember Glen Drive
Austin, TX 78726

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CC: sartin@navanax.org@inetgw

